

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please AMEND claims 1-12 and ADD new claim 13 in accordance with the following:

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An ingredient information management apparatus, comprising:

~~a~~-means for receiving ~~the menu discrimination~~ information input through member terminals;

~~a~~-menu storage means for storing the menu ~~discrimination~~ information and amounts of ingredients ~~corresponding to the discrimination necessary to prepare each menu indicated in the menu~~ information ~~for every menu~~;

~~a~~-ingredient amount searching means for searching out the ingredients and the amounts thereof, from the menu storage means, corresponding to said menu ~~discrimination~~ information;

~~a~~-sale unit storage means for storing a sale unit for every ingredient;

~~a~~-sale unit searching means for searching out ~~a~~-the sale unit, from the sale unit storage means, corresponding to ~~an~~-said ingredient searched out by the ingredient amount searching means;

~~a~~-comparing means for comparing the amount of said ingredient searched out by the ingredient amount searching means with amounts of ingredients corresponding to the sale unit searched by the sale unit searching means and outputting a result indicative thereof; and

~~a~~-menu information searching means for searching out ~~the menu~~ information, from the menu storage means, including said ingredient in case that the result indicates that said amount of said ingredient is less than said sale unit ~~as a result of the comparison by the comparing means~~.

2. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An ingredient information management method, comprising:

~~a step of~~ receiving the menu ~~discrimination~~ information input through a member terminal; storing the menu information and amounts of ingredients necessary to prepare each

menu indicated in the menu information;

~~an ingredient amount searching step of searching out the ingredients and the amounts thereof; from a menu storage means for storing discrimination information and amounts of ingredients corresponding to the discrimination information for every menu, corresponding to said menu discrimination information;~~

storing a sale unit for every ingredient;

~~a sale unit searching step of searching out, from a sale unit storage means for storing a sale unit for every ingredient, at the sale unit corresponding to the ingredient searched at the ingredient amount searching step;~~

~~a comparing step of comparing the amount of said ingredient searched at the ingredient amount searching step with amounts of ingredients corresponding to the sale unit searched at the sale unit searching step and outputting a result indicative thereof; and~~

~~a menu information searching step of searching out the menu information, from the menu storage means, including said ingredient in case that the result indicates that the amount of said ingredient is less than said sale unit as a result of the comparison at the comparing step.~~

3. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A program allowing a computer to execute:

~~a step of receiving the menu discrimination information input through a member terminal;~~

storing the menu information and amounts of ingredients necessary to prepare each menu indicated in the menu;

~~an ingredient amount searching step of searching out the ingredients and the amounts thereof; from a menu storage means for storing discrimination information and amounts of ingredients corresponding to the discrimination information for every menu, corresponding to said menu discrimination information;~~

storing a sale unit for every ingredient;

~~a sale unit searching step of searching out, from a sale unit storage means for storing a sale unit for every ingredient, at the sale unit corresponding to the ingredient searched at the ingredient amount searching step;~~

~~a comparing step of comparing the amount of said ingredient searched at the ingredient amount searching step with amounts of ingredients corresponding to the sale unit searched at the sale unit searching step and outputting a result indicative thereof; and~~

~~a menu information searching step of searching out the menu information, from the menu storage means, including said ingredient in case that the result indicates that the amount of said ingredient is less than said sale unit as a result of the comparison at the comparing step.~~

4. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A computer readable storage medium which stores a program allowing a computer to execute:

~~a step of receiving the menu discrimination information input through a member terminal;~~  
storing the menu information and amounts of ingredients necessary to prepare each menu indicated in the menu;

~~an ingredient amount searching step of searching out the ingredients and the amounts thereof, from a menu storage means for storing discrimination information and amounts of ingredients corresponding to the discrimination information for every menu, corresponding to said menu discrimination information;~~

storing a sale unit for every ingredient;

~~a sale unit searching step of searching out, from a sale unit storage means for storing a sale unit for every ingredient, a the sale unit corresponding to the ingredient searched at the ingredient amount searching step;~~

~~a comparing step of comparing the amount of said ingredient searched at the ingredient amount searching step with~~ amounts of ingredients corresponding to the sale unit searched at the sale unit searching step and outputting a result indicative thereof; and

~~a menu information searching step of searching out the menu information, from the menu storage means, including said ingredient in case that the result indicates that the amount of said ingredient is less than said sale unit as a result of the comparison at the comparing step.~~

5. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~A~~ An expected sales computing apparatus provided with a readable storage medium storing a program allowing the apparatus to execute operations, comprising:

~~a successful sale coefficient storage means for storing the a first successful sale coefficient~~ representing the a probability of purchasing the ingredients of a first menu and the a second successful sale coefficient representing the a probability of purchasing the ingredients of a second menu inquired in relation to the first menu;

~~a means for computing the expected sales of the ingredients of the first menu based on the ingredients of the first menu, the a number of the distributions of the first menu, and the successful sale coefficient~~ coefficients of the first menu searched out, from a successful sale coefficient storage means; and

~~a means for computing the expected sales of the ingredients of the second menu based on the ingredients of the second menu, a number of the inquiries of the second menu, and the~~

successful sale ~~coefficients~~coefficients of the second menu searched out, from the successful sale coefficient storage means.

6. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A expected sales computing method, comprising:  
storing a first successful sale coefficient representing a probability of purchasing ingredients of a first menu and a second successful sale coefficient representing a probability of purchasing ingredients of a second menu inquired in relation to the first menu;

~~a step of computing the expected sales of the ingredients of the first menu based on the ingredients of the first menu, the a number of the distributions of the first menu, and the successful sale coefficient~~coefficients of the first menu searched out, from a successful sale coefficient storage means for storing the successful sale coefficients representing the probabilities of purchasing the ingredients of the first menu; and

~~a step of computing the expected sales of the ingredients of a second menu based on the ingredients of the second menu inquired in relation to the first menu, a number of the inquiry~~inquiries of the second menu, and the successful sale ~~coefficients~~coefficients of the second menu searched out, from a successful sale coefficient storage means for storing the successful sale coefficients representing the probability of purchasing the ingredients of the second menu.

7. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A program allowing a computer to execute:  
storing a first successful sale coefficient representing a probability of purchasing ingredients of a first menu and a second successful sale coefficient representing a probability of purchasing ingredients of a second menu inquired in relation to the first menu;

~~a step of computing the expected sales of the ingredients of the first menu based on the ingredients of the first menu, the a number of the distributions of the first menu, and the successful sale coefficient~~coefficients of the first menu searched out, from a successful sale coefficient storage means for storing the successful sale coefficients representing the probabilities of purchasing the ingredients of the first menu; and

~~a step of computing the expected sales of the ingredients of a second menu based on the ingredients of the second menu inquired in relation to the first menu, a number of the inquiries of the second menu, and the successful sale coefficient~~coefficients of the second menu searched out, from a successful sale coefficient storage means for storing the successful sale coefficients representing the probability of purchasing the ingredients of the second menu.

8. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A computer readable storage medium which stores a program allowing a computer to execute:

storing a first successful sale coefficient representing a probability of purchasing ingredients of a first menu and a second successful sale coefficient representing a probability of purchasing ingredients of a second menu inquired in relation to the first menu;

~~a step of computing the expected sales of the ingredients of the first menu based on the ingredients of the first menu, the a number of the distributions of the first menu, and the successful sale coefficient coefficients of the first menu searched out, from a successful sale coefficient storage means for storing the successful sale coefficients representing the probabilities of purchasing the ingredients of the first menu; and~~

~~a step of computing the expected sales of the ingredients of a second menu based on the ingredients of the second menu inquired in relation to the first menu, a number of the inquiries of the second menu, and the successful sale coefficient coefficients of the second menu searched out, from a successful sale coefficient storage means for storing the successful sale coefficients representing the probability of purchasing the ingredients of the second menu.~~

9. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~An~~ The ingredient information management apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

a means for transmitting ~~the~~ ingredients of a first menu and ~~the~~ a number of the distributions of the first menu to a user terminal, and

a means for transmitting ~~the~~ ingredients of a second menu inquired in relation to the first menu and ~~the~~ a number of the inquiries of the second menu to ~~a~~ the user terminal.

10. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~An~~ The ingredient information management method according to claim 2, further comprising:

~~a step of transmitting the~~ ingredients of a first menu and ~~the~~ a number of ~~the~~ distributions of the first menu to a user terminal, and

~~a step of transmitting the~~ ingredients of a second menu inquired in relation to the first menu and ~~the~~ a number of the inquiries of the second menu to ~~a~~ the user terminal.

11. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~A~~ The program according to claim 3 allowing a computer to further execute:

~~a step of transmitting the~~ ingredients of a first menu and ~~the~~ a number of ~~the~~ distributions of the first menu to a user terminal, and

~~a step of transmitting the ingredients of a second menu inquired in relation to the first menu and the a number of the inquiries of the second menu to a the user terminal.~~

12. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A ~~The~~ computer readable storage medium according to claim 4 for storing a program allowing a computer to further execute:

~~a step of transmitting the ingredients of a first menu and the a number of the distributions of the first menu to a user terminal, and~~

~~a step of transmitting the ingredients of a second menu inquired in relation to the first menu and the a number of the inquiries of the second menu to a the user terminal.~~

13. (NEW) An ingredient information management method, comprising:  
storing menu information and amounts of ingredients necessary to prepare each menu indicated in the menu information and storing a sale unit for each ingredient of each menu; and  
outputting data of an ingredient, a sale unit and an amount of the ingredient upon a menu search, where the amount of the ingredient indicated as a result of the menu search is compared with amounts of ingredients corresponding to the indicated sale unit and an indication is provided when the ingredient indicated is less than the sale unit.